



1. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-16 (cancelled).

Claim 17 (currently amended) A vending network comprising:

a plurality of vending machines each including a wireless transceiver operative to transmit vending machine information to and from other nearby vending machines forming a wireless relay network, one of the vending machines in the wireless relay network for receiving vending machine information from a plurality of the other vending machines in the wireless relay network having vending machine information to report and reporting the received vending machine information at a predetermined time.

Claim 18 (currently amended) The network of claim 17 further comprising a consolidation unit positioned within range of the wireless relay network of vending machines, the consolidation unit configured to receive from the reporting vending machine vending machine information for each of the vending machines in the wireless relay network having vending information to report ~~wirelessly transmitted vending machine information and, said consolidation unit also~~ having an interface with an established communications network.

Claims 19-25 (cancelled).

Claim 26 (new) The network of claim 17 wherein the reporting of the received vending machine information is automatically performed at one or more predetermined times.

Claim 27 (new) The network of claim 17 wherein the reporting of the received vending machine information is performed when the reporting vending machine is prompted to report by a received signal.

Claim 28 (new) The network of claim 17 wherein the reporting vending machine reports vending machine information for each of the vending machines in the wireless relay network having vending information to report.